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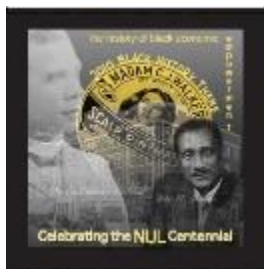
## BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2010

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FEBRUARY, 2010

*"We've inherited the progress of unjust laws that are now overturned. We take for granted the progress of a ballot being available to anybody who wants to take the time to actually vote. We enjoy the fruits of prejudice and bigotry being lifted -- slowly, sometimes in fits and starts, but irrevocably -- from human hearts. It's that progress that made it possible for me to be here today; for the good people of this country to elect an African American the 44th President of the United States of America."*

-- [Remarks by the President in Remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., January 17, 2010](#)



Each February, Black History Month honors the struggles and triumphs of millions of American citizens over the devastating obstacles of slavery, prejudice, poverty — as well as their contributions to the nation's cultural and political life. The first celebration occurred on February 12, 1926. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionists Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was expanded into a full month-long celebration of Black History.

The theme for this year's Black History Month, "The History of Black Economic Empowerment," recognizes the lives of successful black men and women, including Madame C.J. Walker, founder of a beauty empire in the early 20th century and the first African-American woman to become a millionaire.

## LEGACY OF STRUGGLE AND TRIUMPH



[Presidential Proclamation for Martin Luther King Jr. Day](#) - "The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., challenged our Nation to recognize that our individual liberty relies upon our common equality. In communities marred by division and injustice, the movement he built from the ground up forced open doors to negotiation. The strength of his leadership was matched only by the power of his words, which still call on us to perfect those sacred ideals enshrined in our founding documents."

[Martin Luther King and the Challenges of a New Age](#) - Speaking at Vermont Avenue Baptist Church in Washington, DC, President Obama honors Martin Luther King's legacy and ideals, and discusses his thoughts on how the lessons of that time apply to the tough times of today.

[Americans Celebrate Achievements of Martin Luther King Jr.](#) - Americans on each third Monday of January honor the life and achievements of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., (1929–1968), the 1964 Nobel Peace laureate and the individual most associated with the triumphs of the African-American civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s.



[Black History Month Honors Legacy of Struggle and Triumph](#) - Each February, Black History Month honors the struggles and triumphs of millions of American citizens over the devastating obstacles of slavery, prejudice, poverty — as well as their contributions to the nation's cultural and political life.

## NOTABLE AFRICAN AMERICANS

[Beyond Dr. King](#) - This living book profiles a less recognized African American figure of importance, introducing figures like Claudette Colvin (the 15 year old African American woman who refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus months before Rosa Parks did the same thing), Bishop Richard Allen, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett. Read stories of African American achievement and check back on the first day of each month to read new profiles of inspiring African Americans.

## FUN FACTS

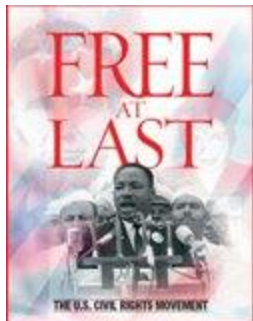


[African American Firsts](#) - Learn more about the African-American firsts at the U.S. Department of State.

[African Americans of the Senate](#) - The role of African Americans in Senate history is not limited to those who served in elected office. In fact, one of the earliest and most enduring roles of African Americans in Senate history came with the construction of the U.S. Capitol.

[Facts for Features: Black History Month](#) - Collections of statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau's demographic and economic subject area intended to commemorate Black History Month.

## ONLINE READING



[Free At Last - The U.S. Civil Rights Movement](#) - This book recounts how African-American slaves and their descendants struggled to win — both in law and in practice — the civil rights enjoyed by other Americans. It is a story of dignified persistence and struggle, a story that produced great heroes and heroines, and one that ultimately succeeded by forcing Americans to confront squarely the shameful gap between their universal principles of equality and justice and the inequality, injustice, and oppression faced by millions of their fellow citizens.

[Justice for All: The Legacy of Thurgood Marshall](#) - Thurgood Marshall stands as one of the great American heroes of the 20th century: He was the attorney who ended legal segregation in the United States with his victory in the Brown v. Board of Education case, and the U.S. Supreme Court justice who championed expanded rights for every individual American -- minorities, women, and immigrants, among many others.

## PHOTO GALLERY



[Black Economic Empowerment in America](#) - Economic empowerment is rooted in education, opportunity and self-help. Education must include financial literacy, development of marketable skills, and knowledge about basic rights. This photo gallery chronicles some of the historical and contemporary struggles and success stories of economic empowerment for black Americans in the United States.

[Nonviolent Protest: Following Martin Luther King Jr.](#) - The right to assemble and peacefully express one's views is a fundamental pillar of democracy. The most famous American exponent of nonviolent protest was Martin Luther King Jr., who led the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

[Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#) - Until the civil rights movement, most African Americans could get a college education only from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). These institutions became the primary source of community leaders and centers of African-American intellectual life.

[The U.S. Civil Rights Movement](#) - During the early 20th century in the American South, racial segregation was the norm, and blacks had limited opportunities. But the 1950s brought forces to bear that would launch a powerful civil rights campaign.



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